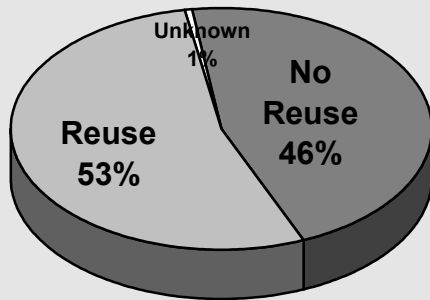




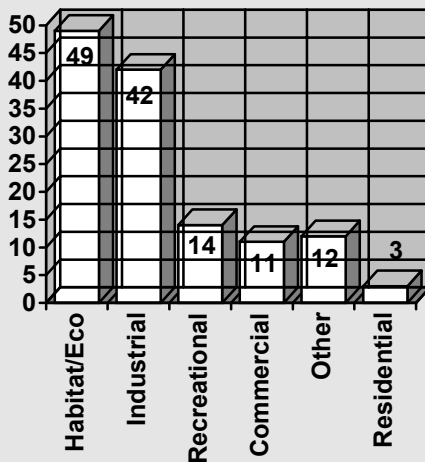
Region 5 Corrective Action Sites: Majority of RCRA Federal Lead Sites Have Reuse Potential

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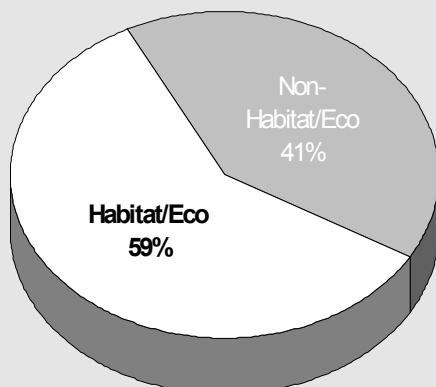
Region 5 RCRA Federal Lead Sites



Number of Potential Future Reuse
Options



Habitat/Ecological vs. Other Reuse Potential



Survey of RCRA Federal Lead Corrective Action Sites in Region 5

In January 2001, the U.S. EPA issued additional RCRA Cleanup Reforms to accelerate the pace of cleanups in its Corrective Action Program. One initiative of the 2001 Cleanup Reforms is capitalizing on the redevelopment potential of RCRA Corrective Action sites. Many sites are located in areas that are attractive for redevelopment and community revitalization. These factors may motivate interested parties to pursue an expedited cleanup, even when additional resources may be needed. Other sites are located in areas that are attractive for the redevelopment of native habitat.

Site redevelopment could include industrial reuse; commercial development; recreation use; residential housing; habitat restoration; or a combination of these. Identifying sites with the potential for redevelopment is the first step in launching the Region 5 RCRA Brownfields Prevention Initiative. Once the sites are identified and the potential reuses defined, resources can then be directed towards those sites to assist in the redevelopment.

In Spring 2001, a survey was conducted of the 155 RCRA Federal lead corrective action sites in the Region. The project managers were asked questions relating to the sites they manage. Questions ranged from property reuse potential to geo-reference map data availability.

When the project managers were asked if their sites have potential for reuse following completion of corrective action responsibilities, 53 percent of the sites were identified as having potential for reuse. The options for reuse include industrial, commercial, recreational, residential and habitat or natural area restoration. The majority of sites were identified as having multiple reuses.

Definition of terms used in the survey:

Reuse Potential: *A site may have excess property that will not be used or is currently unused and would be available for redevelopment following the completion of corrective action.*

No Reuse Potential: *A facility does not have any unused property that can be redeveloped. Some operating facilities are completely built out to its property lines.*

Habitat Area: *Land that sustains local flora and fauna. This could include wetlands, prairies, woodlands, riparian areas, river banks, etc.*

Industrial: *Manufacturing facilities, refineries, assembling plants, power plants, etc.*

Commercial: *Department stores, malls, gas stations, home improvement stores, etc.*

Recreational: *Parks, playgrounds, soccer/football fields, tennis courts, etc.*

Residential: *Homes, condominiums, etc.*

Other: *This could include uses such as farming, ranching, cemeteries, historical locations, highways, etc.*

Multiple Reuses: *When a site is redeveloped into a number of uses, such as commercial and recreations and habitat area. This may occur in large sites, such as military bases.*

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Surprisingly, 32 percent of all sites were identified as having the potential for habitat or natural area restoration as a sole option, or in combination with other reuses. This represents 59 percent of all sites identified as having reuse potential. Another 17 percent of the sites with reuse potential were identified as having recreational reuse as the potential for future land use. Residential reuse accounted for only 4 percent of sites with reuse potential. Industrial reuse was identified as the potential future use in 51 percent of the responses. Commercial reuse represented 13 percent of the sites identified as having reuse potential. "Other" was identified at 14 percent of the sites with potential reuse. Other uses could include farming, historical areas, etc.

Many companies believe that a contaminated site can be seen as an opportunity to restore wildlife habitat. By using the appropriate tools and remediation, the facility can achieve dual purposes -- cleaning up the site and, at the same time, enhancing the environment. Wildlife habitat restoration includes both market and non-market benefits. Increased property values in areas adjacent to greenways, river buffers, or prairies, are examples of market benefits. Non-market benefits include learning centers, recreational areas for the community, and ecological enhancement.

The Region is currently working with several industries to enhance and restore wildlife habitat while cleaning up contamination. One example is working with the steel industry in Northwest Indiana to restore habitat for some endangered species, such as the Karner Blue butterfly and the endangered Lupine plants. Another example is at petroleum refineries, where industry is enhancing or restoring habitat in unused areas, by creating butterfly gardens, riparian zones, and learning trails for the local citizens.

The property owner makes the decisions regarding reuse of RCRA Corrective Action sites. Several companies in Region 5 are in the process of negotiating property sales and transfers that involve reuse, usually with community participation. There are numerous methods that state or federal RCRA program managers can assist with reuse planning. Please contact the state RCRA program or Region 5 for information about property reuse at RCRA Corrective Action sites.